



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: July 2, 2008

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(g): Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into a Chapter 8 Agreement with Ventura County to acquire APN 620-0-210-065 in Las Lajas Canyon with in-lieu mitigation fees, and further authorizing said action for APN 220-0-022-185, in the Oxnard plain and APN 680-0-052-475 in unincorporated Westlake Village area, contingent upon their funding and acceptance by other government agencies.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into a Chapter 8 Agreement with Ventura County to acquire APN 620-0-210-065 in Las Lajas Canyon with in-lieu mitigation fees, and further authorizing said actions for APN 220-0-022-185, in the City of Oxnard and APN 680-0-052-475 in unincorporated Westlake Village area, contingent upon their funding and acceptance by other government agencies.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) infrequently enters into Chapter 8 Agreements with Ventura County to acquire tax defaulted properties. The MRCA has acquired over 1,500 acres through this process in Los Angeles County. This is the first time that the MRCA has sought properties in a Chapter 8 Agreement with Ventura County since the early 1990's when small parcels were acquired Chivos Canyon, Chatsworth Lake Manor, and along Santa Susana Pass Road.

Staff removed approximately ten parcels from the County's auction list. Only one parcel in Las Lajas Canyon makes practical and economic sense for the MRCA to acquire. The staff recommendation and resolution provide authorization to proceed with two additional parcels only if other government agency's agree to fund and accept fee simple title to those parcels. The Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) staff has informed staff that it has no interest in the subject Westlake Village area parcel because it was a former construction dump for the

adjacent tract. Likewise the Oxnard City Manager has not returned a phone call or email.

The County has provided an unnumbered Chapter 8 Agreement to sign. It contains three above three parcels totaling 29.167 acres. In order for the County Treasurer and Tax Collector to finalize these agreements, the MRCA must provide a resolution authorizing the acquisition of the parcels.

The table below includes the APNs , parcel sizes, general location, and current cost to the MRCA. The cost estimate is projected through October 2008. Unfortunately, the cost of the parcels increases substantially every year as penalties and back taxes increase. A brief description of the parcel follows along with attached aerial photograph with the parcel boundaries.

Ventura County Chapter 8 Agreement

APN	Acreage	Location	Price
220-0-022-185	2.37	Oxnard, park area between Emerson Ave. and San Mateo Place	\$6,200
620-0-210-065	0.11	Las Lajas Canyon Rd., just west of Rocky Peak park	\$1,400
680-0-052-475	26.687	near Via Colinas and Thousand Oaks Blvd.	\$10,200
Totals	28.167		\$17,800

Oxnard

This parcel is part of the existing Lemonwood Park and hopefully can be remedied by the City of Oxnard. It abuts an open trapezoidal drainage channel and an elementary school. Records show that Bank of America is the underlying owner. Staff extended a courtesy call to the City to complete the transaction and transfer if desired.

Las Llajas Canyon

This parcel abuts dirt Las Llajas Canyon Road in the extensive small lot subdivision behind the Las Llajas Dam. Acquisition of this parcel would protect a small piece of one of the most ecologically significant watersheds of Calleguas Creek and aid in protection from future large scale development in this area near Rocky Peak Park.

Unincorporated Westlake Village

This large parcel is adjacent to a residential neighborhood in unincorporated Westlake Village. The property is 90% surrounded by a parcel owned by Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency. It contains high quality chaparral vegetation but approximately 0.5 acres would have to be brushed annually.